

REMARKS

By this reply, claims 1, 12, and 21 have been amended; and claims 9, 10, 28, and 29 have been cancelled. Accordingly, claims 1, 3-8, 11-23, and 25-27 are pending in this application. No new matter has been introduced by this reply.

In the Office Action, the Examiner took the following actions:

- (a) rejected claim 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for allegedly failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention;
- (b) rejected claims 1, 3-6, 8, 9, 11, 14-23, and 27-29 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,149,090 to Chen et al. ("Chen") in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,732,383 to Ferrari et al. ("Ferrari '383");
- (c) rejected claims 7, 12, 13, 25, and 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Chen and Ferrari '383 in view of U.S. Patent Nos. 4,911,445 to Ferrari et al. ("Ferrari '445"), 5,096,194 to Yong et al. ("Yong"), and 5,398,928 to Rudell et al. ("Rudell"); and
- (d) objected to claims 10 and 12 as being dependent upon a rejected based claim, but allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicant has amended claim 21 by replacing the word "transverse" with "longitudinal" in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion on page 2 of the Office Action. In light of this amendment, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of claim 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph has been rendered moot. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the indefiniteness rejection of claim 21.

Applicant has also rewritten claim 10 in independent form by adding the features recited in claim 10 to independent claim 1. In light of this amendment, and in accordance with the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter on page 4 of the

Office Action, Applicant respectfully submits that amended independent claim 1 is in condition for allowance. Claims 3-8, 11-23, and 25-27 each depend from amended independent claim 1, and are allowable for at least the reasons stated above that amended independent claim 1 is allowable. In addition, each of the dependent claims recites unique combinations that are neither taught nor suggested by the cited art, and therefore each is also separately patentable. Accordingly, all of the pending claims are now in condition for allowance, and as such, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the pending rejections and the timely allowance of this application.


In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our Deposit Account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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